

Local Government Input to the California's Climate Action Team Report to the Governor and Legislature

**Compiled and Submitted by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability
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ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) has received both written and verbal comments on the Climate Action Team's (CAT) Report to the Governor and Legislature from local governments throughout California. Those comments are compiled in this submittal. Individual local governments may also be submitting their official comments directly to the Climate Action Team.

Ninety percent of California's population resides in urban areas. As the economic and population centers of the state, cities and counties are huge energy consumers, and thus large producers of greenhouse gas emissions. The powers that local governments wield over energy and fuel use make them critical allies in any state effort to curb these harmful emissions. It is in this spirit that ICLEI submits the following comments, as the leading organization working with municipalities on climate protection in California.

FEEDBACK ON THE CAT REPORT FROM LOCAL GOVERNMENTS PARTICIPATING IN ICLEI'S CITIES FOR CLIMATE PROTECTION™ CAMPAIGN

This "feedback report" is the culmination of ICLEI's efforts to coordinate local government review of and input on the CAT Report. That coordination included many individual conversations and email exchanges with local government elected officials and staff, as well as facilitation of local government testimony at the CAT public hearings, and one conference call to specifically discuss providing input to the Report. In addition, local governments will be submitting official written comment directly to CalEPA.

I. Encouragement for a Strong Report

On the whole, local governments feel that the CAT Report is an appropriately aggressive approach to ensuring that the Governor's climate protection targets are met. There is a great deal of support for the work of the CAT, and eagerness to participate in implementation of the actions called out in the Report, as described in detail below.

Some sample comments from written input:

"...the strategies proposed by the Climate Action Team show vision and provide solid direction as to how to address California's anthropogenic sources of greenhouse gas emissions." – **Marin County**

"We...thank the Team for producing a forward thinking report in a timeframe that reflects the urgency with which climate change must be addressed." – **San Francisco**

“This is a noble endeavor, and we applaud your effort.” – San Diego

II. Inclusion of Local Governments in the Final Report

The strongest piece of feedback that ICLEI has received is that local governments must be included, and included prominently, in the final version of the Report. Local governments have been the leaders in the state on the climate issue for the past ten years, and that history should be acknowledged. Local governments have themselves made commitments to climate protection and are achieving reductions in greenhouse gas emissions that can only help the state's effort.

The following local governments are participating in ICLEI's Cities for Climate Protection™ Campaign. The table below highlights the progress they are making toward their commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions:

Jurisdiction	GHG Baseline	Target	Climate Action Plan
Arcata	X	20% below 2000	Draft
Berkeley	X	15% below 1990	X
Chula Vista	X	20% below 1990	X
Cloverdale	X	25% below 1990	X
Cotati	X	25% below 1990	X
Davis			
Fairfax	X		In progress
Healdsburg	X	25% below 1990	X
Los Angeles	X	20% below 1990	X
Marin County	X		In progress
Novato	X		
Oakland	X	15% below 1990	X
Petaluma	X	25% below 1990	X
Rohnert Park	X	25% below 1990	X
Sacramento	X	20% below 1990	
San Anselmo	X		
San Diego	X	15% below 1990	X
San Francisco	X	20% below 1990	X
San Jose	X	20% below 1990	
Santa Clara County			
Santa Cruz	X	20% below 1990	X
Santa Monica	X	14% below 1990	X
Santa Rosa	X	25% below 1990	X
Sausalito	In progress		
Sebastopol	X	25% below 1990	X
Sonoma City	X	25% below 1990	X
Sonoma County	X	25% below 1990	X
West Hollywood	X		
Windsor	X	25% below 1990	X

These local governments comprise 30% of California's population. Together, they have already reduced an identified 7 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions – that is roughly equal to 12% of the Governor's target. This demonstrates the power of local governments to realize the state's climate protection goals.

Sample comments:

“...local governments are not discussed in the draft recommendations of the CAT. We were pleased to hear that this oversight will be corrected. The impacts of climate change present serious threats to local governments and with over 90% of Californians living in urban areas, local governments must be involved in the State's strategy.” – **San Francisco**

“Note that local governments have direct impacts on the following strategies: landfill methane capture; zero waste- high recycling; urban forestry; water use efficiency; transportation energy efficiency; smart land use and intelligent transportation.” – **Sacramento**

“San Diego's GHG emissions are being produced by actions taken by City residents, businesses, and municipal operations. Collectively, the City is responsible for about 15.5 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year, based on 1990 emissions levels. By taking no action to curb current emissions levels, these would increase to 22.5 million tons per year by 2010. By adopting a goal of 15% reduction of baseline levels, the City hopes to reduce emissions to 13.2 million tons per year by 2010. Between 1990 and 2003, the City's programs were able to reduce GHG by a total of **3,814,000 tons** through changes in energy and water use and waste disposal.” – **San Diego**

“...local governments can serve as valuable allies in achieving many of the transportation-related goals outlined in the Report. Local governments have both the desire and ability to assist with implementation measures; traffic congestion negatively impacts productivity in the region and is of significant concern for local residents. Furthermore, local governments set policy related to land use and development decisions that influence transportation patterns.” – **Marin County**

“[Santa Monica's climate protection] programs have resulted in reduced greenhouse gas emissions of 5% between 1990 and 2000. Based on projected growth and current programs in place, it is projected that greenhouse gas emissions will be 3% above 1990 levels by 2010. This figure compares favorably to a projected increase of 9.4% in the same period if no action had been taken.” – **Santa Monica**

“We encourage the Climate Action Team to strongly emphasize the significance of municipal efforts in their report to the Governor and Legislature...In 2002 CCSF committed to an aggressive ghg reduction target of 20% below 1990 levels by 2012 and subsequently developed the Climate Action Plan of San Francisco (see: www.sfenvironment.com/aboutus/energy/cap.htm).” – **San Francisco**

III. Public Goods Charge on Transportation

Local governments are strongly in favor of a public goods charge on transportation. Transportation is the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas and air pollution emissions in communities. The local governments participating in the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign have found it difficult to secure the funding necessary to implement the types of policies and programs necessary to reduce GHG emissions from the transport sector. These measures include transit-oriented development, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, car-sharing programs, etc. A public goods charge on transportation fuels is a fair way of generating the funds to implement these activities.

Local governments have long benefited from public goods charges on electricity and natural gas. Indeed, these funding streams have been responsible for the implementation of many energy efficiency programs over the years which have made California a leader in conservation for the rest of the nation to follow. Use of public goods charges to achieve public benefits is nothing new, and it is entirely appropriate for such a charge to be applied to transportation fuels.

Sample comments:

“California is the 12th largest contributor to global warming in the world, with transportation as the single largest component of our emissions. Therefore, it is particularly important that our response to transportation be proportionate. Californians stand to benefit enormously from programs that increase alternative fuel use, boost fuel economy, and add public transportation options. To this end, proper investment is fundamental to ensuring that these strategies are implemented. The Team’s recommendation to accomplish this via a public goods charge is appropriate and measured.” – **Marin County**

“Note that the highest impacts on climate protection have to do with implementing smart growth land use and intelligent transportation options... both of which are spearheaded by local governments. Anything that could be done to include local governments in a proposed funding strategy would be appreciated.” – **Sacramento**

“The State can extend its worldwide leadership in energy efficiency to the transportation sector by establishing a public goods charge that will provide funding to solve California’s transportation dilemma.” – **Santa Monica**

IV. Coordinated Financing

Local governments play such a major role in developing and implementing the policies and practices that reduce emissions, financing structures should allow for an adequate flow of financial resources to support these local efforts:

“A coordinated investment strategy process should include a methodology to provide funding for local governments that work towards improving the effects of climate change in their jurisdictions.” – **Sacramento**

“Please include local governments in the GoCalifornia investment strategy.” –
Sacramento

V. Additional General Comments

The following comments were made during a conference call ICLEI convened for its members for the purpose of discussing how to provide input into the CAT Report:

- Local governments should be considered as “early adopters” and receive benefits accordingly, along with utilities and businesses.
- The state should institute AB 939-type legislation for greenhouse gas emissions, requiring a percentage reduction in GHGs by local governments by a target year, as AB 939 did with reducing the waste stream in the 1990’s.

VI. Collaboration with Local Governments

There are many ways in which local governments can help the state achieve its climate protection goals. First, local governments are measuring their greenhouse gas emissions – they are establishing baselines for their municipal operations and communities, forecasting emissions growth and assessing reduction from implemented policies and programs. Second, they are implementing all the types of measures that the CAT has listed in its Report. It makes sense for there to be a strong working relationship between state agencies and local governments as the state moves forward with finalizing and implementing its climate action plan.

Sample comments:

“Local climate protection efforts directly contribute to the State targets and in many cases, for instance zero waste goals, local governments can implement greenhouse gas reductions in ways that the State cannot.” – **San Francisco**

“We encourage the Climate Action Team to...convene a workshop to identify local governments that are already taking action on climate change, develop new state policies that enhance local governments ability to meet their ghg reduction targets, and identify existing policies that inhibit local ability to implement climate protection programs.” –
San Francisco

We recommend that the State work with ICLEI and other municipalities to support local efforts, enhance program development, and to conduct outreach to constituents.” – **Marin County**

“We encourage the Climate Action Team to...work with ICLEI to identify local governments in California that already have in place climate protection programs, and consider including them as part of an Advisory Team.” – **San Diego**

“Although planners are starting to embrace Smart Growth concepts, there is no coordination that I know of that correlates available fuel supplies over the next 50 years

with proposed growth scenarios. The State and local governments seem to favor highway and street funding over mass transit funding, yet intuition leads one to believe that supply and demand may not remain in equilibrium. There should be an effort to provide future fuel availability to local planners so that they can scenarios for fuel constrained futures.”

– **Sacramento**

“The City of Sacramento is considering development of a climate action plan for the City and or County that would be similar to the format of the California Climate Action Registry’s General Reporting Protocol. If the State (or ICLEI or CCAR) could assist in providing information required by the protocol (e.g. kWh consumption, therm consumption, gallons of fuel consumption, etc.) for all Counties it would assist the City in developing baselines.” – **Sacramento**

“We encourage the Climate Action Team to...Provide guidance and adequate resources to assist local governments in meeting their GHG emission reduction target. Once again, our collective success at the local level brings the State closer to realizing its goals.” –

San Diego

“The City will continue to test, promote, and adopt progressive policies and practices to reduce our impact on global warming. We urge the Climate Action Team and the State to support local government’s efforts and work together to ensure that State, regional and local policies are aligned and result in the greatest possible emission reductions.” – **Santa Monica**

THE PATH FORWARD: STATE / LOCAL CLIMATE POLICY COORDINATION

Any successful climate policy coordination effort between state and local levels of government must seek to achieve three main goals:

- 1) Removal of state level obstacles to local implementation of GHG reduction policies;
- 2) Identification of policies or actions the state can take to assist local governments in achieving their local climate protection goals; and
- 3) Identification of actions local governments are taking that can assist the states in achieving its climate protection goals.

ICLEI proposes the following options for facilitating ongoing coordination and collaboration between state agencies and local governments on the issue of climate protection. Varying levels of resources would be needed to implement each option.

Option 1 – Local Government Advisory Committee

A small group of local government officials is convened to serve for a specified time period to provide review and input into the state’s developing climate action planning. Depending on resources, this group could meet in person or via conference calls.

Option 2 – One-time State / Local Climate Workshop

A one-time workshop would serve the purpose of two-way sharing of information. State agencies would provide information on how local governments can navigate the state government to locate funding and other resources to assist with implementation of

elements of their local climate action plans. The local governments would share information on the greenhouse gas assessment and reduction activities in their jurisdictions.

Option 3 – Technical Information Sharing and Assistance

State agencies and local governments convene to share data and quantification techniques for measuring greenhouse gas emissions. The focus of this effort is to incorporate local government data into the state's greenhouse gas emissions accounting, and to improve local government measuring of their own emissions.

Option 4 – Formal State / Local Climate Policy Coordination Project

This option consists of elements of the previous three. A permanent local government advisory committee would be established to participate in meetings with state agencies to assist in the development and implementation of climate policy. Workshops on a variety of topics would be convened to ensure collaboration among state and local officials. This would be viewed as the ongoing mechanism to ensure that local activities are accounted for in state GHG accounting, that there is coordination and information-sharing between state and local governments, and that there is continuous collaboration on developing new and innovative strategies to finance and implement reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

ICLEI thanks CalEPA and the Climate Action Team for the opportunity to provide local government comment on the Report to the Governor and Legislature, and looks forward to close collaboration to help achieve the state's climate protection goals.

Written comments have been submitted by:

Marin County
City of Sacramento
City of San Diego
City and County of San Francisco
City of Santa Monica

Verbal comments have been provided to ICLEI by:

City of Rohnert Park
City of Santa Barbara
City of Santa Cruz
City of Santa Rosa
City of Sebastopol